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POPPY RAISING LINKED TO FOOD SHORTAGE

OPIUM BRINGS HIGHER PRICES -- Hsing-sheng Wan-pao, 14 Jan 50

Hong Kong, 13 January -- According to an observer who traveled through the re-
 gion north of the Ch'ang Chiang (Yangtze River) last August, many farmers are grow-
 ing poppies instead of rice, despite the food shortages prevailing in the calamity-
 stricken areas.

Next to inflation, the problem of food shortage is considered the most press-
 ing in China today. Because the income from poppies is much larger than that from
 rice, many farmers, especially in Anhwei Province, are being induced to raise pop-
 pies.

The same observer pointed out that the Trade Bureau of the CCP has promised to
 buy all the opium available. The Trade Bureau is the largest buyer of opium in the
 Fou-yang region. It makes exorbitant profits by buying opium at a low price in
 Anhwei and selling it at much higher prices in Nan-ching and other large cities.
 For example, the price of opium in Fou-yang is only one seventh the price in Nan-
 ching and elsewhere.

It seems that the Communist policy, at present, is to encourage the cultiva-
 tion of poppies and the smoking of opium in order to increase the governmental rev-
 enue, the same informant said.

NORTH CHINA ANTIFAMINE CAMPAIGN PROVES EFFECTIVE -- Wen-hui Pao, 23 Jan 50

Pei-p'ing, 22 January (Hsin-hua) -- The antifamine campaign is being pursued
 earnestly in North China. The most successful methods of combating famine thus far
 have been to enlist the calamity-stricken people in production work, to encourage
 self-rehabilitation, and to obtain aid from nonafflicted people in nearby areas.

Approximately 1,300,000 persons in North China were made destitute last year
 from such natural calamities as flood, drought, invasion of insects, and hail-
 storms. Of that total, some 400,000 in Hopeh and 250,000 in P'ingyuan were made
 homeless because of floods.

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Flood victims in Hopeh are now engaged in various work to sustain themselves. In the special districts of T'ien-ching and Pao-ting, more than 120,000 calamity-stricken people have turned to fishing. In Shou-chang Hsien of P'ingyuan Province, the afflicted people are working in various subsidiary occupations, such as transporting public grain. More than 80 percent of the hsien populace were helped in this way. The nonafflicted people are doing their part too. Recently, these people collected more than 1,667 tons of grain from 27 unaffected areas of P'ingyuan and sent it into the afflicted areas to help the unfortunate.

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